

"St. Ferdinand's Church"
Florissant, Mo.

HABS No. Mo. 1401

HABS
MO.

95 FLORI

2-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

ADDENDUM
FOLLOWS...

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

W.T. Trueblood, District Officer,
1520 Chemical Building, St. Louis, Mo.

Eugene L. Fleitsch, Deputy District Officer,
1520 Arcade Building, St. Louis, Mo.

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
DISTRICT OF MISSOURI (NO. 1).

HABS
MO.

95-Flori

2-

Mo
PROJECT NO. 40

St. Ferdinand's Church.

The corner stone of the original church was laid in the year 1821. The fore part of the church and the tower are additions to the original structure.

The blessing of the Church took place November 21, 1821, Father De La Croix performing the ceremony.

St. Ferdinand's Church is believed to be one of the oldest (remaining) houses of worship between the Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains.

The Church is built of brick.

Information received from: "The Story of an Ancient Parish" by Gilbert J. Garraghan, S.J.

EUGENE L. PLEITSCH.

W *4/3/57*

Addendum to
Church of St. Ferdinand
Florissant
St. Louis County
Missouri

HABS No. MO-140

HABS
MO,
95-FLORI,
2-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

Addendum to CHURCH OF ST. FERDINAND

HABS No. MO-140

HABS
MO,
95-FLOR,
2 -

Location: West end of St. Francis Street, Florissant, St. Louis County,
Missouri

HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

The following information was recorded by Alexander Piaget and Charles van Ravenswaay at the time the photograph was taken:

"The...brick building forms the center of a T-shaped group whose wings consist of the rectory [to the left] and the Convent of the Sisters of Loretto [to the right; see MO-139]. The cornerstone, which was presented to Father de la Croix by Mother Rose Philippine Duchesne...was laid by him February 19, 1821; on November 21 of the same year the church was blessed and opened for services. It was consecrated by Bishop Joseph Rosati, September 2, 1832. The present structure replaces an old log church erected on the site about 1788. The Rectory, a two and a half-story brick building with dormer windows, was built in 1819.

In 1870, an extension of some 20 feet and a new facade of late Gothic design were added to the church. The interior of the building contains the original galleries on the right and left of the altar. The one on the left was used by Negro slaves, and that on the right by Mother Duchesne and the Sisters of the Sacred Heart, and later by the Sisters of Loretto. A white and gilt wooden tabernacle preserved in the church was made in 1789 by a local cabinetmaker for the first log building; the tabernacle in use at present, likewise white and gilt, dates from 1821. It is carried in the annual Corpus Christi procession. In the church are the paintings, The Crucifixion, with the Virgin and St. John (School of Rubens, ca. 1604) and St. Ferdinand (artist unknown, thought to have been painted about 1786), which Bishop Louis William Valentine Du Bourg brought from Europe. Preserved in the altar is a life-size wax figure of St. Valentine wearing his priestly vestments and holding a chalice, also brought from France by Bishop Du Bourg. The figure contains relics of the Saint." (From: Workers of the Writers' Program of the Work Projects Administration in the State of Missouri, Missouri, A Guide to the "Show Me" State, (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1941), 340-341).

The windows and possibly the barrel vaulted ceiling with pressed tin surface date from 1870.

PROJECT INFORMATION

The Piaget-van Ravenswaay Survey consists of a number of photographs, primarily of sites and structures in Missouri, which were taken before 1938 by Alexander Piaget and after that by Paul Piaget, both in conjunction with Charles van Ravenswaay. Photographs of buildings were incorporated into the HABS collection in 1985 by Laura Rupp and in 1986 by Deborah Fulton, HABS historians. A master list is available in the [REDACTED] records for MO-1800.